

Pennsylvania's counties tackle tough issues facing their communities

Written by The Office of the Commissioners
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– County leaders from across the commonwealth of Pennsylvania gathered in Somerset County at the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP) 125th Annual Conference today adopted 30 resolutions, adding or changing articles in the Pennsylvania County Platform (Platform), the official list of CCAP policy positions that guides the Association's work in the public policy arena.

Resolutions approved for inclusion in the Platform included such diverse topics as: pipelines and the enforcement of laws and operations; human services funding issues including county government's first right of refusal when human services are privatized; the call for the commonwealth to undertake a review of human services funding formulas and the impact of those on counties; support for re-entry programs for prisons and juvenile detention facilities; allowing counties or their designee to assess fees for solid waste or recycling; and other resolutions.

"County commissioners and their counterparts in home rule counties have been coming together for 125 years to discuss the issues they share in common and what is most important to those served by county government," said Mark Hamilton, CCAP president and Tioga County commissioner.

"The issues may change and shift over the years, but the importance of this Annual Conference and the role that it plays in helping counties come together to discuss the ever growing complexities of serving local families and our constituents, has not. The resolutions adopted today reflect county government's position on policies that can greatly impact our ability to be effective advocates for our constituency."

Hamilton further noted that the Association's Platform would guide CCAP in the year ahead and beyond. He noted it would have a considerable role in the policy positions the Association takes on legislative matters and the policy positions it will advocate the General Assembly take on pending legislation affecting counties and Pennsylvania families.

"The Platform we adopted today is used by counties to lobby the state legislature about local community issues and the residents that are impacted by them," he said. Counties are a primary service provider on behalf of the state, administering human services, judicial services, corrections, elections, emergency management and 911, planning, economic development and job training, record keeping and other programs.

In addition to policymaking, county officials elected leaders of the Association for 2012: elected president was Jo Ellen Litz, Lebanon County commissioner; Christian Leinbach, Berks county commissioner, first vice president; Pam Snyder, Greene County, second vice-president; and treasurer, Joseph Kantz, Snyder County commissioner. Their one-year term will begin in January 2012.

CCAP is the voice of county government, a statewide, nonprofit, nonpartisan Association representing all of Pennsylvania's 67 counties. CCAP membership includes the county commissioners, council members, county executives, administrators, chief clerks and solicitors. CCAP strengthens the counties' abilities to govern their own affairs and to improve the well-being and quality of life for every Pennsylvania resident. It advocates for favorable state and federal legislation, programs and policies on behalf of counties. CCAP is committed to service excellence through education, information, insurance, technology and other programs that support effective county government.

Founded in 1886, CCAP is an affiliate of the National Association of Counties. CCAP celebrates

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its 125th Anniversary in 2011.

For more information about Pennsylvania's counties and CCAP, log on to www.pacounties.org

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